Message from the AVP

Last month, UW Facilities Services had an opportunity to host colleagues from the Facilities Services organization at the University of Utah, who came to see and learn about the Finance & Facilities Lean implementation. The U of Utah’s Associate Vice President of Facilities Management, Mike Perez, toured FS departments with me, while his staff visited some of our Lean teams and heard about their process improvements. Mike was so impressed he wrote a letter to UW President Michael Young in which he shared his admiration for what we are doing here and said that he and his staff intend to imitate and use what they learned from us back in Utah. He continued by saying that the culture his team experienced at UW FS was “extraordinary.”

This is a perfect example of what world class looks like: an organization that others wish to emulate. Thank you for the tremendous job you are doing in making Facilities Services the remarkable organization it is.

At my last AVP Quarterly meeting with FS leaders, I discussed with them the Facilities Services Leadership Standards. This new document describes our standards for leadership in FS, based on conversations about leadership that the directors and I have been having over the past years with leaders throughout FS. This is a collection of descriptions of what good leadership looks like in eight key areas: safety, customer focus, respect, accountability and high performance, teamwork/collaboration, engagement, constancy of purpose/focus, and technical job knowledge. It describes what we aspire to and expect of ourselves and the standard to which we will hold ourselves and each other. This is what world-class leadership looks like. It gives us a common language to describe the kind of behavior we are looking for from every employee at every level. While much of the document focuses on leadership behaviors, there is a section describing the kinds of behaviors expected of every employee in FS, regardless of position. We will have many conversations about the FS Leadership Standards in the coming months as we incorporate these expectations into our performance evaluation, training and recognition programs. I encourage you to have a look at them. You can view the document on the FS website here: http://www.washington.edu/facilities/orgrel/human_resources.

Thank you again for your work to make Facilities Services a world-class organization, and for all you do for the UW every day.

FS Training Center: Lending Library

Did you know the FS Training Center has a library? FS employees are welcome to read books or view digital materials at the TC or check them out. The FS TC’s growing collection includes books and instructional DVDs. The library has fifteen copies of books such as The Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni. If you would like to set up a book group on your team, the training center can help with creating study materials or discussion questions. Is there a book you would like your team to read? An instructional video you would like to watch? Send your requests for books or other instructional materials to fstrain@uw.edu or call 685.9452.

Space is still available in several autumn quarter classes. View course offerings and sign up online at: http://www.washington.edu/facilities/orgrel/training.

Communicating in the FS Workplace

This interactive course covers the SOLID communication model and includes how to give and receive feedback. Wednesday, December 4, 7-8 a.m.

How to Conduct Effective Meetings

Wondering how to keep your meeting efficient and interesting? Learn to conduct a meeting, create an agenda, manage disruptive participants and keep the meeting on track. Wednesday, November 20, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Wednesday, December 18, 7-8 a.m.

Our Mission: We learn, adapt and innovate to preserve physical assets and deliver best services to enable the University’s pursuit of excellence and discovery.
Our Vision: Facilities Services is a world-class organization providing exceptional service anywhere, anytime to enable discovery and excellence at the University of Washington.

Sustainability Summit 2013

Several FS departments and units including Transportation Services, Recycling & Solid Waste, Custodial Services, UW Surplus and Grounds Management had tables this year at the fourth annual Sustainability Summit, held on October 23. Representatives from FS educated the campus community about our environmentally sustainable practices and services, alongside other University departments and local businesses and organizations.

UW: Green Again

The UW was recognized with the Green Washington Award by Seattle Magazine again this year, earning a Silver Award in the Academia category. Seattle Magazine’s November issue highlights projects FS leads or is involved in, such as the Smart Grid, energy efficiency improvements, LEED construction and green roofs.

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Students Gain Real-World Experience through FS Internships

As the return of autumn ushers in a new school year, the campus is flooded with students eager to advance in fields from architecture to zoology and everything in between. Facilities Services has an indirect role in educating students by keeping the campus running, but we also help students learn through hands-on special projects. Over the past two years, we've been able to use Student Reinvestment Funds to provide opportunities for 28 students to learn and grow in a professional setting, and that's in addition to other types of student positions we provide. So, who are these talented young people and what have they been doing for FS?

Aaron Tam, environmental sciences major, is Outreach Coordinator for Recycling & Solid Waste. “He manages our Facebook page and collaborates with campus partners on educational initiatives and activities that help increase recycling and composting awareness,” says Recycling & Solid Waste Manager, Emily Newcomer. Aaron’s outreach efforts have also included assisting with resource fairs and tabling, submitting ads for The Daily and establishing an Instagram photo-sharing account. A big part of his job includes coordinating volunteers for Recycling & Solid Waste’s blue bag recycling campaign at Husky Football games.

“It’s really pushed me to develop connections and learn how to connect through other people and research,” says Aaron of his experience with Recycling & Solid Waste. Aaron, a sophomore, thinks research in wildlife conservation may be in the future, but he’s still exploring specifically what he wants to do. “I really just want to contribute to protecting the environment. Going into this position, I had different unrelated interests like art and marketing that helped me do just that by promoting recycling. Through my position at Recycling & Solid Waste, I see how they can all connect. How broad and interrelated they really are. These are areas that I will keep in mind and consider when shaping my career,” he says. The hands-on experience is helping him clarify what he wants to do in the future.

In Organization Resources and Relations, Jenna Girgus, media and communications studies major, has created a lift gate safety training video and an online, interactive training on storm water for ORR’s Safety unit. Her current project is a “Stretch & Flex” poster for the shops, illustrating basic warm-up exercises. Jenna started working with ORR during her freshman year and is now in her junior year. “It’s definitely really good for my resume,” she says. “I’m getting experience in what I actually want to do and not a lot of students get that. I’ve learned a lot more skills that are in my major but that are not necessarily taught in a classroom.” She also appreciates meeting different people and, “experiencing a different side of campus than a regular student would.”

She’s learning about the process of developing training, including collaboration with her teammates and other departments, thinking through how she wants to put the training together, and responding to feedback. “It’s been a lot of fun,” she says. “I really like it. I’ve learned a lot of new things I don’t think a lot of other jobs would come close to teaching me.”

Students from civil engineering, as well as architecture and geography, have been part of a beehive of 20 student projects in Campus Engineering and FMC related to GIS (Geographic Information Systems). Student Reinvestment Funds enabled the departments to transform a pilot program, in which students volunteered, into an established set of paid student internships.

“They’re not just making photocopies,” says Cesar Escobar, GIS/GPS Specialist, of the program. “That’s what we don’t want.” He makes sure the students have a chance to practice giving presentations and engage in other real world experiences. “How can I challenge the students on the latest technology?” asks Cesar, who also tries to expose the students to “the big picture of what we’re working towards,” including the Balanced Scorecard and Lean.

Civil Engineering student Kelsey Rose Price was the first student intern the department hired with Student Reinvestment Funds. She was with the department for two years and was offered a job by an engineering firm upon graduating. “Some of the students have gone on to MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and the Port of Seattle,” reports Cesar, describing how they credit their internships with enabling them to move to the next step in their career paths.

Civil engineer Jared McDonald was first hired as an intern by FMC, and is now employed in CEO as a Program Operations Specialist. Jared’s first project was to map out the square footage of lawn panels and garden beds for the entire campus. Jared appreciates how well-rounded the internship experience was; it gave him the chance to see different sides of the engineering field and the different systems he’s likely to encounter in the future. “I’m civil,” says Jared, “but I work with mechanical and electrical. I really get the full range of things I won’t get anywhere else. It’s also
on campus, and we can walk the sites. A lot of people spend their first five years just in an office in front of a computer screen.”

Other projects the students have been involved in include updating the ADA guide for persons with disabilities and migrating the 200-page paper book to a digital format. Student interns have inventoried all of the elevators and exterior doors and verified which are ADA accessible. While conducting these inventories, they have also been able to verify the location of Blue Emergency Phones and Night Ride pickup points.

Jay Dahlstrom, current GIS/GPS Assistant in CEO and a geography student, has been working closely with civil engineer Jim Morin to mark and document 500 storm water drains and confirm which drains flow to the lake, a project he’s been able to be involved in from start to finish. He’s also worked on mapping loading zones and delivery parking spaces for the Bollard Management Lean Team. He considers his internship to be “the same as taking a 5-10 credit class every quarter,” but one that provides a practical counterpoint to his more theory-based studies. “Class is very theoretical and five years behind where the industry is at,” says Jay. “This is the cutting edge of industry. When you apply for jobs, they want experience with this,” he says of the need for practical experience with software and hardware tools, which range from SharePoint and calendar systems to LiDAR scanning technology. The students also bring valuable perspectives to the table. “They come in with new fresh ideas,” says Jared. “We saw this in our class. You might want to consider it.”

(To learn more about student projects in CEO and FMC, view the Prezi timeline the students created online here: http://prezi.com/df5zrbctiq20/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy).

Tom Jenkins, Student Assistant in Emergency Management, was hired in March of 2012 to develop a Mass Casualty Incident/Mass Fatality Incident implementation plan to supplement the UW’s emergency plan. Tom completed his project in the summer of 2012 and has gone on to draft a Hazardous Weather Operations Plan, completed in May 2013, and a Mass Care and Sheltering Plan, which is currently in the final editing stage. These plans address how resources will be directed in the event of an emergency, what those involved in disaster response will be asked to do, and the flow of information.

Far from being new to emergency planning, Tom came to the UW to complete his undergraduate studies after a career in meteorology and disaster response in the U.S. Navy. Now in his senior year, Tom is working on his B.A. in environmental studies through the College of the Environment, with a minor in naval science through R.O.T.C. He thinks his experience working in UW Emergency Management will be “tremendously helpful” in earning an associate emergency manager’s license so he can become an emergency manager after graduating. He also values the vantage point he’s had within an institution of higher education. “I’m really getting a lot of exposure to how people look at emergency management from different jurisdictions,” he says.

“It’s a really great office to work for in particular,” he comments, “but I’ve talked to a few other students in Facilities Services and everyone seems content with the opportunity and excited to get hands-on experience through the UW instead of competing for internships in the job market. It’s still pretty tough out there. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed the year and half I’ve worked here, and I recommend to anybody who meets the qualifications to go for it. It’s a great opportunity.”

This is only a small sample of the student projects across Facilities Services funded with Student Reinvestment Funds. Altogether, the program represents a win-win for the students and the department. Student Reinvestment Funds have made it possible to provide these unique and enriching experiences to students while also allowing FS to tackle hard-to-get-to projects. Students gain valuable practical experience while FS benefits from the talent and fresh perspectives UW student bring to the table.

Left to right: Scott Preston, Tom Jenkins, Charles Kennedy and Steve Charvat